Improvement Plan Theme Progress Summary October 2023

Theme	Summary	Achievements this period	Key Milestones
Organisational Culture	**Establishing Organisational Culture** **Summary** - One Team Framework has been agreed and is in the process of being implemented across the Council. Launch and Share events with managers have now concluded with positive feedback from managers around the events and the implementation of the values and behaviours. Framework was introduced at all staff briefing in July. People Strategy is in final stages of preparation. - Organisational Health indicators have been reported for 2022-23 and the trends are being used to inform the People Strategy and roll out of the One Team Framework. Employee Engagement Survey conducted in September 2023 to provide a temperature check on culture, with results due to be available in early November. - The Member and Officer relationship continues to be positive and is enabling the Council to move forward with decisions. To support continuous improvement, further insight was collated in Autumn through the Employee Engagement Survey and semi-structured interviews with a sample of Members and Officers. **Progress this month:**	**October** Proposal of new approach to Employee performance review presented to Trade Unions **September** - Forward plan of all Member Briefings in place for next 3 sessions - Project plan for launch of One Team Framework- Update of programme containing all workstreams	- Phase 2 Engagement: Determining Desired Culture - March 2023. **Complete** - Approval of document setting out the desired organisational culture - March 2023. **Complete** - Workforce Strategy approved- **Due for approval in November** - Management Development Programme Agreed- **Pilot held in April** - Corporate Induction Revised. **Complete**

	• People Strategy has been presented to Leadership Team on 17.10.23. Discussions and steer to amend and add some additional points. Also need to incorporate Organisational narrative which is still subject to further consultation. • The workstreams within the strategy continue to be actioned. • Projects to embed the One Team Framework continue to progress as per plan presented to IPRM in September • Proposal of a new approach to Employee Performance Review presented to Trade Unions to commence information and consultation. Change management support and training being developed. • Risk to technical/process recording as Oracle Talent module may not be live until July 2024 • Semi-structured interviews with a sample of Members have been carried out. **Next steps:** • Further meeting planned next month with TUs to continue dialogue on Employee Performance Review? **Issues raised**: • OC.A2.1- Workforce strategy amber rated due to slippage on due date. New due date November 2023 to be amended on change control. **Focus 2 Exceptions**	presented to Leadership team **August** • Proposal for Employee Performance Review created with Values embedded • Feedback from launch and Share sessions fed back to leadership • Social Media Policy review complete	• Leadership Team review of All Member briefings - **Meeting held in July** • Processes relating to employment of Chief Officers included in induction programme for committees at start of Municipal Year- **Included in MDP** • Approval of refreshed Member Development Programme for start of Municipal Year. **Complete** • Employee Recognition Scheme launched- **Date tbc** • Guidance in place for effective working with MPs- **August 2023 work commenced** • Social Media policy reviewed- August 2023 **Complete**

	• OC.G1.3 **Governance Training and Development- Amber rated** Due May 2024 **Progress commentary:** 23 attendees completed Decision making training in October for key decision makers which included scenario-based learning on procurement and financial regulations, Training material and guidance available to all staff on intranet. Regarding broader scenario-based learning, Officers involved in pulling training across finance, procurement and governance have undergone significant changes of personnel. Next step is still to bring a new project team together to agree training detail and to diarise. Amber rating reflects need to bring project group together and progress the planning. • OC.G1.5 **Delivery of Directorships and Trusteeships Training -** Amber rated Due in July 23. **Progress commentary:** Training carried out 31 October, 20 members attended along with 5 officers The training session was recorded and will be made available for others to view. This **training will be delivered annually. Amber rating reflects that training date i**s later than originally intended		• Corporate Governance Development Programme Agreed – **approach agreed to deliver via scenario-based learning. New Project Group to be formed.** • Delivery of Corporate Governance Programme commences- **Commenced**
Corporate Oversight	**Focus 1** **Customer Journey Programme**	**October** VERTO user acceptance testing complete	• Oracle- Discovery phase complete- Feb 23. **Complete**

Summary

- Programme governance remains in place. Housing Solutions have carried out a number of process mapping workshops covering the areas highlighted- Adult Social Care, Borough Economy, Housing Options and Revenues and Benefits. A sharing event was carried out 23 August 2023.
- The council has collectively (including Housing, Regeneration, Borough Economy) been working to improve the response to cases on the member portal.

Progress this month:

- Meeting with Cabinet Member, Town & Vice Chairs on 2 October 2023, work to date shared on issues raised and further work planned. Agreed to attend all upcoming Town Meetings to provide feedback to all Members.
- Leadership Team are continuing to receive weekly updates on Cllr Portal cases.
- Once all Town meetings have been attended, to attend future quarterly meetings to gain any further feedback as an on-going improvement mechanism.
- New Ward Co-ordinators have commenced in post and will be working closely with Members to come up with Ward Plans & Priorities and ensure a live action plan is in place for all Wards.
- Director of Finance along with ACE has agreed funding will be provided for external support to produce CES, due to limited resources and other commitments.

Next steps:

September

- Skills gap analysis complete for financial services and a training programme is now complete and in place- delivery will take place over the next 6 months

August
- Draft State of Borough report received from Economic Intelligence Unit.
- Business Planning Framework drafted

- Oracle- Modelling phase complete- June 23. **Complete**
- Oracle Fusion implemented- April 24. **On track**
- Corporate debt recovery processes reviewed- **Complete April 23**
- Sign off of 2020/21 accounts **Complete**
- Sign off of 2021/22 accounts **Due to be submitted to GT in November**
- Transformation PMO in place – **Local Partnerships Review complete. Final report to LT due 11 July.**
- Corporate PMO in place – **Local Partnerships Review complete. Final report to LT due 11 July**

	• Resident engagement to be rescheduled once agreement is reached on external resourcing • Trialling new 'Member stall' event Pre Full Council as a further way to improve Officer/Member relationships and information sharing. • Resident engagement specification work commenced but in early stages for provision of external support. • Customer Service Specification to be finalised. **Issues raised**: Customer Strategy development showing as amber progress this month due to timeline slippage- external support agreed-specification work to commence. **Resolve Issues relating to the completion and sign-off of final accounts** **Summary** • 2020/21 accounts have been signed off by the auditor with no qualifications. • 21/22 accounts – agreed with Grant Thornton that audit dates will be moved to October to allow more internal quality assurance process before external audit takes place **Progress this month**: • The 2021/22 accounts are in production. The organisation has closedown timetable processes that it adopts for each financial year, and these are being completed having started after the 2020/21 accounts were produced.			• Verto system implemented – **Commenced** • Corporate Transformation Board operational-ToR and Membership to be re-set following Local Partnerships Review - **Complete**

Next steps:

- Provision of 2021/22 accounts to Grant Thornton in January.

Issues raised:

- No issues raised

MTFP

Summary
- MTFP projects are being managed within the Corporate Transformation Programme and project management methodology and transformation design principles are being applied.
- Work to develop and review MTFS and MTFP for 2024/25 with members conducted over Summer and Autumn 2023, to develop achievable/deliverable savings and a balanced Budget for 2024/25.
- Use of benchmarking information to inform services to include in future transformation activities.
- Update to MTFS to be presented to Cabinet in November 2023 at same time as seeking approval to commence consultation on proposed savings for 2024/25.

Progress this month:
Reviews being conducted to identify future transformation opportunities for 2025/26 onwards
- MTFS currently being refreshed.

	• Capital programme being reviewed. • Approach to consultation on savings proposals being finalised **Next steps:** MTFS Update approved at Cabinet 1 November 23, due at Scrutiny 16 November 23. **Issues raised**: • No Issues raised **<u>Corporate Transformation</u>** **Summary** • Transformation Design Principles agreed. • Review was held with Local Partnerships and the report is informing the establishment of Corporate PMO. • The Corporate Transformation Board's terms of reference have been revised and regular meetings scheduled. **Progress this month:** • Corporate Transformation PMO establishment on track for completion November 2023 • Verto User acceptance testing complete, refinements underway. Verto launch date for CTO early November. Corporate Transformation Board's focus has been on establishing progress of current transformational programmes and service reviews, as part of development of the MTFS		

Next steps: • Verto Launch - November **Issues raised:** • No issues raised **Focus 2 Exceptions** CO.B3.1 **Develop a Continuous Improvement Framework – Amber rated** • **Progress commentary:** Service planning approach developed to build corporate agendas and improvement areas into business planning discussion - evidence bundle to include performance, resident feedback, internal audit and risk management to identify improvement activity at service level. Business planning workshops scheduled for November and December 2023. Approach to be reviewed in early 2024 following completion of workshops and business plans; continuous improvement built into service planning and performance management framework. • CO.D1.1 **Directorate level restructuring** • **Progress commentary:** Senior Leadership Team structure approved at Full Council 24/10/23.		

| Strategic Direction | Focus 1- no focus 1 in this theme

Focus 2 Exceptions

- **SD.F1.0- Customer Journey Strategy- Amber rated**
  Due March 24

  Progress commentary: Director of Finance along with ACE has agreed funding will be provided for external support to produce CES, due to limited resources and other commitments. Specification work commenced but in early stages. Rated Amber as resources have been allocated but timelines will be subject to slippage. | **October**
Narrative workshops to conclude this month
- Commercial Project Officer recruited

September
Narrative workshops held with LGA to inform communications approach
- Corporate Procurement Strategy Action plan finalised

August
- Narrative workshops held with LGA to inform communications approach
- Corporate Procurement Strategy Action plan finalised | Commercial Strategy Approved- **Approved March 23**
Regeneration Pipeline: Strategic delivery partner in place- **Cabinet report approved July 23**
Approval of Communications and Corporate Affairs Strategy- **Date tbc**
ED&I Strategy Approved- September 2024. **On track**
Regular Residents' Survey & Budget Consultation in Place – **Contract in place for 2023 and 2024 for corporate consultation exercises. Budget consultation completed Summer 2023. Resident's Wellbeing & Perception Survey conducted in Autumn 2023, results due November.**
Customer Journey Strategy Approved- |

			Expected March 2024. Approval of Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy- **Approved February 2023** • HRA 30-year Business Plan approved- **Approved February 2023**
Decision Making	**Focus 1- no focus 1 in this theme** **Focus 2- no exceptions to report**	**October** • Scrutiny committee produced annual report- due at October council	• Leader to confirm Executive's position on any further review relating to the Wragge and Cox reports – **Complete-**
Procurement & Commercial	**Focus 1- no focus 1 in this theme** **Focus 2 Exceptions** • **PC.C1.1- Performance Management System- Options appraisal- Amber rated Due Oct 23** **Progress commentary**: Options appraisal and business case being finalised, further engagement with service areas being conducted to refine requirements. Amber rated due to slippage of timescales.	**October** SEND3- Project team identified, launch meeting diarised and ToR agreed. **September** • Implementation of Phase 2 Tech forge complete	• Waste and Leisure Contracts added to In-tend contract management module- **Steady progress. Additional enhancement work underway** • Street Cleansing Recovery Plan implemented- Ongoing delivery

			Fleet replacement complete- **Expected end 2023**
		August • Delivery of recommendations for Waste contract complete- lessons learnt booked in following industrial action in June/July 2023	• SEND Transport Contract Monitoring arrangements in place- **On track** • SEND3 procurement commences – **Complete** • Corporate Performance Management System in place- **Options appraisal due October** • Lion Farm - Report to Cabinet on determination of position of developer- **Transferred to 'business as usual' management** • Arrangement in place for future delivery of leisure services- **Complete**

			• Phase 2 Tech Forge implemented- **Complete**
Partnerships & Relationships	**Focus 1- no Focus 1 in this theme** **Focus 2 Exceptions** • **PR.A1.8- Sandwell Childrens Trust- KPI's (along with accompanying tolerances) implemented in Q2- Amber rated. Due Dec 23.** • **Progress commentary:** KPIs and tolerances are currently under review by the DfE appointed independent chair of the SCT Improvement Board and in negotiation with the DCS and CEO of SCT. • **PR.D1.3- Consultation on VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Draft Strategy- On hold** **Progress commentary**: Annual report on 2022/23 grants produced and shared with Leader, Cabinet Member for Communities and Chair of Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management. Further work in progress to develop approach for wider VCS engagement. Relationship with VCS continues to be positive - second Cost of Living Summit involved 30 local partner organisations to launch the joint Tackling Poverty Plan	**October** Benchmarking findings report complete for the project to review and remodel the pathway between children's and adult's **September** • Preparing for Adulthood Project- Benchmarking meetings completed with Dudley MBC and Birmingham City Council **August** • The Initial findings report for Preparing for	• Review of SCT (Sandwell Children's Trust) Contract concludes- - **complete. 2 remaining KPIs under discussion.** • Transitions Project Commences- **Project commenced and 'as is' modelling started in May. PM recruitment out to advert.** • Transitions Project incorporated within Corporate Transformation Programme- **Complete** • VCS Strategy approved- **On hold**

		Adulthood Project shared with the Preparing For Adulthood Project Board in July	